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ABSTRACT

Unlike the linear, serial process of reading books, learning to "read" television is a parallel process in which multiple pieces of information are simultaneously received. Perceiving images, only one aspect of understanding television, requires the concurrent processing of information that is compounded within a symbol system. The syntactical combinations of images are further compounded by such technical variables as lighting, camera movements, and editing style, each with its own codes and conventions. Television's sounds interact to create their own grammars, and the viewer must simultaneously process across the symbol systems of image and sound. Perceptually, viewers today look at more characters, take in more complex settings and movements, and hear more natural sounds and nonsynchronous music than did viewers 15 years ago. Conceptually, television delivers multiple stories and multidimensional levels of meaning. Programming is becoming more substantively complex by inviting the audience to understand television at once from conflicting intellectual and emotional dimensions. A program's characters sometimes do something to remind viewers that they are watching TV. Such self-reflexive television promotes thought at two dimensions: understanding television and understanding how television is understood. Roughly all 18-38 year olds were socialized by TV, and this television literate generation is most responsive to the trends of the medium and has gained increasing power over network programming decisions since 1970. Fluent in the grammar of television, this TV generation probably requires more challenging formats to hold its attention, and approaches the sounds and images of television in a way that is distinct from other media generations. (Four pages of notes are included.) (NKA)

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THE TELEVISION GENERATION, TELEVISION LITERACY, AND TELEVISION TRENDS

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Abstract

The Television Generation,
Television Literacy, and Television Trends

Several trends in television today exploit the special grammar of television and challenge the audience's skill in parallel and holistic forms of information processing. The trends are most apparent in programs attracting an audience raised on television. This essay attributes the grammatical trends to a "television literate," "television generation," that is most able and willing to participate in the complex symbolic patterns that characterize the trends. Critical and speculative in nature, this essay also claims a place for the critical perspective in discussions about the symbolic processes of thought and their relationship to television.

THE TELEVISION GENERATION, TELEVISION LITERACY, AND TELEVISION TRENDS

Cheers, Hill Street Blues, and Miami Vice have been labeled "YUPPIE television" for they attract a young, urban, up-scale audience. Prime-time YUPPIE television programs span several genres but amid the diversity many of the programs share a complex production style associated with television literacy.

The complex production style is characterized by several symbolic trends that have emerged in contemporary, network programs and their cognitive counterparts. More specifically, many programs are constructed of an abundance of perceptual and conceptual information that an audience must simultaneously process at different levels if it is to render the programs meaningful. The sights and sounds of many of today's television shows also present abstract meanings which require an audience familiar with holistic and intuitive forms of understanding. The television generation, which includes the young, urban, upwardly mobile professional, is such an audience.

This essay supports the claim that the language of television is learned and suggests the television generation's mastery of television literacy is largely responsible for the emergence of symbolic-cognitive trends in television today. This essay also claims a proper place for media criticism in issues surrounding the relationship between the symbolic processes of media and mind.

Surprisingly, critical studies of television have not actively contributed to ongoing discussions on the symbolic nature of cognition.[1] Critics tend to concentrate on how television

messages influence specific thoughts but not on the patterns of thought induced by and reflected in the symbolic relationships among the sounds, images, and ideas of television. Critical studies are not carried out in controlled settings and therefore cannot produce scientifically reliable conclusions, but as Gardner notes in his review of television effects studies, years of quantitative inquiries have provided few answers to media-mind questions.[2] Although critical studies linking symbolic constructions of media and mind cannot generalize their conclusions to nature of all media and mind, they contribute to research programs by testing hypotheses in their natural settings. Critics make "field observations" about real television shows and audiences by watching television, and by watching themselves and others watching television.[3]

The "field observations" this essay makes about trends in contemporary television programs and their relationship to television literacy are organized into two major sections. The first section defines television literacy and identifies several trends in contemporary network programs that exploit the audience's skill in reading the messages of television. The second section supports the notion of a "television generation," that is at least partly distinguished by its fluency in the grammar of TV, by linking the television generation to contemporary TV trends.

TELEVISION LITERACY AND TELEVISION TRENDS

Literacy is an individual's understanding of how symbolic elements or codes are combined in acceptable ways--herein referred to as symbolic conventions or grammars--to produce meaningful units.[4] "Literacy" is most often used in reference to linguistic grammars but the term also applies to understanding the acceptable codes of any symbol system; for instance, the symbol systems of mathematics and music.

There is considerable agreement among scholars that processing the codes of television is distinct from processing verbal messages, and that the "grammar" of television is learned.[5] Mastering the grammar of television includes knowing that when one shot dissolves into another, the two shots are somehow associated, and when the screen fades to black, discontinuity in location, time, or subject matter is suggested. Mastering the grammar of television also includes knowing about symbolic conventions that have not and perhaps cannot be expressed in rules.

Television grammar is considerably different from linguistic grammar because television consists of more than one symbol system that must be simultaneously and holistically processed. Salomon explains that the codes of film compound codes within and across symbol systems, whereas linguistic grammars only compound codes within the system of verbal language. His explanation is applicable to the codes of television as well as film:

> Compounding within any one symbol system
> is evident in the generation of sentences

> and dialogues using words or in the creation of increasingly longer photographic sequences using single shots. Compounding across symbol systems is evident in the establishment of single shots, each of which is already based on a number of symbolic modes (such as pictures, language, and music), and combining these into higher levels of articulation-sequences, syntagms (roughly parallel to paragraphs in text,) and whole films. This kind of articulation or compounding is specific to film.[6]

Another distinction between the codes of television and verbal language that affects learning their respective grammars is that the structure of verbal syntax can be logically expressed in rules but the language of film and television is guided more by what Salomon calls "conventions of coherence."[7] Whereas the formal rules of linguistic systems can be discursively taught, the amorphous forms of television's language are mostly learned through experience.[8]

More and more television shows seem to be exploiting the grammar of television by compounding the relationships within and across the aural-visual symbol systems of television, thereby engaging the audience in the cognitive synthesis of multifarious stimuli. These trends in contemporary television provide additional support for the presence of "television literacy," that has been acquired and reinforced through television viewing.[9]

Simultaneous Processing Within and Across Symbol Systems

Unlike the linear, serial process of reading books, which proceeds from left to right and from the top of the page to the bottom, learning to read television is a parallel process in which multiple pieces of information are simultaneously received.[10] Several symbolic trends in television today test the audience's skill in simultaneously processing information. One category of trends may be thought of as perceptual for they involve the audience in the process of decoding sights and sounds. Trends that invite the audience to understand television from different perspectives at the same time may be thought of essentially conceptual. The distinction between perceptual and conceptual trends is drawn for purposes of organizing the discussion as the author recognizes the interdependence of what is perceived and conceived.

Perceiving images, only one aspect of understanding television, requires the simultaneous processing of information that is compounded within a symbol system. The elements that make up an image are greater than the twenty-six letters of the alphabet, and the techniques for combining the spatial components of a picture are potentially limitless. Many more kinds of relationships are formed in a painting, for instance, than are formed by words on the page of a book. The former must be perceived simultaneously rather than sequentially. "With the speed of light," Dondis says, "visual intelligence delivers

multiple bits of information, simultaneously serving as a dynamic channel of communication."[11]

The syntactical combinations of images are further compounded by the technical variables of television: Lighting, camera movements, and style of editing are an integral part of visual meaning, each with own codes and conventions.

The images of television mingle with sounds. Most obvious of the sounds of television is the dialogue, colored by the force, rate, and tonal qualities of the actors' voices. Television also reveals the natural sounds of footsteps, doors opening and closing, wind, rain, and the noises of a studio audience clapping and laughing. Additionally, music comes in many forms. The sounds of television interact to create their own grammars and the television viewer must simultaneously process across the symbol systems of image and sound.

Perceptually, viewers today look at more characters, take in more complex settings and movements, and they hear more natural sounds and nonsynchronous music than television viewers fifteen years ago. Conceptually, television delivers multiple stories and multidimensional levels of meaning.

The number of actors employed in television series seems to be growing. The change from single, double, and family characters to extended work families has been steady. Today, it is not uncommon for shows to feature fifteen or more characters regularly. Hill Street Blues, for example, "consists of twenty-nine identified characters: twelve regular main characters, eleven more main characters, and six minor actors."[12]

There is also a tendency for shows to present their feature characters among a background of others.

In Hill Street Blues viewers must contend with the noise in the hallway, telephones ringing, and a dozen or more characters having a conversation at the same time. A similar atmosphere surrounds Cagney and Lacey and the doctors at St. Eligius. Though Moonlighting rarely involves co-workers in its central plot, its featured detectives, David and Maddy, are shown to work in an office full of insignificant others. Comedies busy their sets as well. Remember how crazy the operating room was on M*A*S*H? Though not always as hectic as Unit 4077, Night Court, Cheers, and Newhart often fill their sets with background others and activities.

The sounds of television, as well as the images, arouse viewers' senses. There is much extraneous sound competing for the viewer's attention. In addition to having characters all speaking at the same time about different subjects, viewers are exposed to horns honking, church bells ringing, and sirens blaring from beyond the set of Hill Street, Cagney and Lacey, and Cheers, to mention a few.

Music, emerging as a staple on prime-time, is adding yet more aural stimuli for the viewer to process. The cameras of Miami Vice often crash parties that feature live musical rock groups. But more often top rock sounds are presented in a nonsynchronic format while the vice squad stakes out a joint, chases its villains, and kills them in an artistically staged massacre. Moonlighting also incorporates some music videos into the show. Music, engages the audience in perceptual processes that are

different from perceiving images and dialogue.[13] Significant to the purpose of this essay, the audience must orchestrate its perceptual processes to grasp the diverse symbolic forms that reach the senses all at once.

At the conceptual level, television shows in the eighties ask viewers to integrate character histories and multiple storylines, view the stories from different "reality perspectives," and respond with contrary emotions at the same time.

The personalities of television's characters have become cumulative. Loyal viewers of Hill Street Blues, St. Elsewhere, Cagney and Lacey, and Cheers must assimilate the biographical histories of many characters. Viewer's conceptions of characters must then be accommodated as new character information is revealed. A recent episode of Cagney and Lacey, for instance, surprised most viewers by revealing that Mary Beth Lacey, the more traditional of the female detective duo, had an abortion as an unmarried teenager.

Just as the characters have a history, so do their stories. Many of the storylines on today's shows are ongoing. Hill Street Blues and St. Elsewhere rely upon continuous stories. Other shows are more subtle in their use of continuity: Rather than chain together never ending stories, continuity often takes the form of referring to a storyline weeks or even months after its initial airing. For example, in one early episode of Cagney and Lacey, Mary Beth Lacey ran away from the tensions of work and family without telling anyone. Just recently, perhaps two years since the "run away" episode, Chris Cagney reminds Mary Beth of

the incident. Sitcoms such as Cheers, The Cosby Show, Family Ties, and Kate and Allie also have a serial quality, although the audience is rarely left waiting until next week for the conclusion.

Multiple and intertangled storylines also contribute to the simultaneous processing of information required by television. Today, it is not uncommon for the characters to act out several stories in a thirty or sixty minute time slot. The distinction between main storylines and subsidiary storylines has faded so that viewers are given little to no cues on where to focus their attention. One can never be sure if a seemingly insignificant sequence on Hill Street Blues will become a major storyline or if, when, and how a particular sequence will transform itself into what was believed to be a separate storyline.

Finally, today's programming is becoming more substantively complex because it invites the audience to understand television from opposing intellectual and emotional dimensions. Self-reflexive viewing, quite evident in several shows, has the audience accepting and rejecting the reality of television simultaneously. Feuer discusses the self-reflexive quality of Mary Tyler Moore Productions that use television to comment on television.[14] The contexts of The Mary Tyler Moore Show, WKRP, and Lou Grant were set up to comment on television, radio, and newspaper respectively. But other shows, including Remington Steele, which presents and solves crimes through references to old movies, use mass communication to comment on mass communication. Buffalo Bill put self-reflexivity into second gear by commenting on how television shows comment on television.

Another form of reflexivity occurs when the characters in a program do something to remind viewers that they are watching television. St. Elsewhere, another MTM production, often breaks the drama with references to other MTM productions. In one sequence, for example, several doctors meet in a neighborhood bar for a couple of brews. The bar turns out to be "Cheers." The characters never mention the name of the bar, but the irony is clear to the viewer who recognizes the set and the feisty waitress, Carla.

Moonlighting takes a more direct approach to self-reflexivity by having the character, David, openly comment on the fictional nature of television. In one episode, for instance, David breaks down a door in an overly dramatic and unnecessary attempt to save Maddy. She asks, "Why did you do that?" And he responds, "Because it was in the script." On occasion David speaks directly to the audience. For instance, in the middle of one scene he turns to the camera and asks, "Is this bad? No its not bad. It works for me. It works for you." Such self-reflexive television promotes thought at two dimensions: understanding television and understanding how television is understood.

Television trends also encourage audiences to interact with the television at different emotional dimensions. Comedy shows mix comic-absurdity with more serious emotions in a formula Feuer calls "warmedy."[15] Dramas tend to alternate between serious drama and comedy in a pattern that might be called "dramedy." Both dramedy and warmedy call upon contrary emotions in an unpredictable and seemingly inconsistent pattern.

In summary, self-reflexivity, intertextuality, perpetual continuity, and multifarious visual and aural stimuli are trends in contemporary programming that require viewers to process a multitude of perceptual and conceptual information at the same time. Audiences of shows exhibiting these trends must be particularly adept at the simultaneous integration of information. In other words, they must be television literate.

One way that human perceptual abilities respond to an abundance of aural and visual stimuli is by approaching the text holistically rather than analytically. Holistic processing is a second component of television literacy challenged by contemporary television.

Holistic and Synthetic Processing of Abstract Stimuli

Meaning, whether it is derived from a book or a television set, involves the synthesis of information. However, a significant difference between the synthetic quality of verbal and aural-visual meanings is found in their respective grammars. Given the logical and sequential structure of verbal language, sentences are initially perceived analytically, only later to be synthesized into a "holistic abstract ideas."[16] In contrast to the reader of a book, the television viewer must immediately synthesize the sights and sounds of the screen if he or she is to understand the television message.

It is impossible to see any image: a painting, a photograph, or moving picture, initially in parts. The total picture is first seen and then analyzed. The dots, lines, shapes, directions, tones, colors, textures, dimensions, proportions, and movements of an image are rarely noted individually. Because the relationships of an image hit the viewer "all at once-immediately," he or she responds by arranging them into a more general pattern.[17]

Sounds are believed to be processed similarly. Fiske and Hartley claim that oral modes of perception are episodic, mosaic, dynamic, and ephemeral, and therefore opposed to the analytical processes of perceiving the written word.[18] From editing to narrative development, there is a tendency for television shows to encourage viewers to process information in a top-down fashion: first synthesizing information into a holistic form and then rendering specific scenes and sequences meaningful.

The editing on many television programs celebrates the amorphous nature of television grammar. Logical transitions between sequences are often nonexistent. Establishing shots are being used less, hence, location is often left to the imagination. Jump cuts are being used more. Not only is it difficult to know the time or place of a particular shot, it is sometimes impossible to understand an entire sequence until later sequences provide a link of unity.

The editing on Miami Vice is notorious for its ambiguity. One episode of Miami Vice opens with jump cuts of Trudy, a supporting but significant character on the vice squad, painting her face. The sequence of close-up shots of Trudy's hands, lips, eyes, and the paint, provide no information about who is painting

their face or why. The meaning is finally grasped through the accumulation of pictures and music rather than through a deductive pattern that uses dialogue and establishing shots to set up the context. The specific shots can only be understood once the entire meaning of the sequence is clear. The sequence, therefore encourages a synthetic and holistic response. The analytic thinker may become impatient for the point of the sequence.

Many scriptwriters and editors also force viewers into postponing their understanding of scenes by ambiguously arranging storylines. The stories are intertangled and the editing and dialogue create a degree of uncertainty for the viewer about where and when stories will become intermingled. There are so many stories and characters, and so much variety in the pace of plot development that it is impossible to analyze individual shots and sequences for logical answers to the questions who? what? where? when? and why? Instead of hopelessly struggling to make sense of the details, viewers are likely to form more general meanings for time, place, and events, such as "a day at the precinct," "out on the street," "a conflict over search and seizure laws," "a drug bust," and so on. Structural disorientation induced by television is like that experienced when one moves to a new city. First, one must gain an impression of the city's overall layout and only then is it possible to remember where to find the bookstore.

False beginnings and misleading storylines also force viewers to abandon an analytic approach to watching TV. For example, one episode of Newhart opened with ten minutes of sequences about Dick's diminishing skill at darts. Viewers, accustomed to analytic structures, that set up the conflict in the opening

segments of a show, expect the remainder of the show to be about Newhart accepting or overcoming his failure. Not so. The story that unfolds in this particular episode is about the relationship between Newhart's secretary, Stephanie and her boyfriend, Michael.

In review, the television message is made up of many technical and substantive variables that receivers of the message must simultaneously assemble into a meaningful whole. There is clearly a trend in television programming to increase the forms and levels of information that must be processed. For those viewers accustomed to processing information sequentially and analytically, the complex compounding of codes within and across symbol systems may be frustrating. For an audience that has acquired sophisticated skills in reading television, the more complex forms of television production may be a welcomed challenge.

THE TV GENERATION'S TELEVISION LITERACY AND TELEVISION TRENDS

The parallel between the symbolic trends of contemporary television and the qualities of television literacy seem more than coincidental, especially when one considers that the trends appeal to audiences comprised of the television literate, television generation. The television generation, because it is most comfortable with the codes and conventions of television, may be more willing to engage in simultaneous and holistic patterns of interpretation than other "media generations." Furthermore, the

television generation may require more sophisticated television grammars to sustain interest.

Gumpert and Cathcart argue that a media generation is group of people joined and influenced by their media experience.[19] That is not to say those who shared the radio age have not been influenced by television, but each media generation was raised within and influenced by a unique "network of coexistent media."[20] Today, roughly all 18-38 year olds were socialized by TV.[21] The TV generation dressed, ate, played, and did its homework in front of the television screen. The TV generation's exposure to other cultures, war, and an overkill of information on just about any topic, separates it from previous media generations. But most relevant to the idea of television literacy, the TV generation watched TV before it could read and the television generation is most responsive to the trends.

In addition to speculation about the ways television may have influenced the values, needs, behavior, and knowledge of its first generation of dedicated viewers, there is conjecture that television has imposed particular forms of thinking in the television generation that are independent of the content being transmitted.[22] Cathcart and Gumpert, for instance, argue that every generation inherits a grammar from the medium of communication that introduces it to the world; a grammar that has a long-term influence on the way each generation processes information.[23] Accordingly, "Those of the radio age will continue to be influenced by the biases of radio in a way different from those of the TV age, even though they later acquire television literacy."[24]

The patterns of thought believed to characterize the TV generation are the same parallel and holistic processes that are associated with television literacy. Although the results are mixed, psychologists continue to investigate whether visual and spatial forms of intelligence are more dominant in the television generation, and whether it prefers parallel patterns of information processing over serial patterns.[25] Additionally, there is speculation that those raised in the television era may develop a propensity for holistic, relational patterns of thought.[26]

Research linking television grammars to a long-term "cognitive style" is inconclusive, but the link between the complex codes and conventions of many contemporary television programs and their target audience reveals an audience that has learned and mastered the grammar of television.

The Television Generation: Keeping up with the Trends

The television generation has gained increasing power over network programming decisions since 1970. In the 1960s, programming decisions were based upon the "quantity" of people watching a show, and then marketing strategists demonstrated that an audience of active consumers can be smaller but of greater value to sponsors than a large audience that does not spend its share of the gross national product.[27] The purchasing habits of 18-49 year old urbanites have made them an important target of

television programmers.[28] In response to competition from independent channels, network programmers prefer up-scale, professional, 18-49 year old viewers, who have a little extra change in their pockets.[29]

A significant and expanding portion of the 18-49 year old audience shares the experience of not knowing what it is like to be without television. It also shares an appreciation for the complex symbolic trends:

> The young, urban, professional viewer is back at the TV set, having outgrown Hollywood's teeny-bopper movies and having found--on NBC--shows designed especially for them.
>
> Slowly over the past three or four seasons, NBC has wooed them with the relationship-probing comedy of "Cheers," the human drama of "Hill Street Blues," and "St. Elsewhere," the video techniques and silk shirts of "Miami Vice" and the intelligent family humor of "Family Ties" and "The Cosby Show."[30]

Referring to some of the trends discussed in this essay as the "ensemble style" of television, Henry also places an important segment of the TV generation in front of the television trends: "Among the educated, upscale, mid 30ish members of the baby-boom generation--the audience that advertisers desire most--the ensemble shows have made television viewing respectable again."[31] Traub claims that shows, such as Hill Street Blues and Cheers, "have been caviar to the young adult but dross to kids and oldsters."[32]

Because the codes and conventions of TV are more ingrained in the television generation, it may be more willing and able to participate in the complex symbolic patterns presented on these shows.[33] It has been noted that the complex style of some contemporary television shows require viewers to devote considerable attention to the television.[34] The attention factor runs counter to television viewing habits which include sharing TV time with other chores and forms of entertainment.[35] Salomon's studies found that American children process television messages in a cognitively shallow way.[36] If the television generation is, as this essay suggests, more fluent in the grammar of television, it may not need to commit its attention to a program. The television generation may easily make sense of the newspaper and Miami Vice at the same time.

The complex style of contemporary trends in television may, in fact, draw the television generation to the trends. If it is the case that, as some have argued, television viewing has had an adverse affect on the TV generation's imagination and its ability to sustain attention then the television generation may have grown bored of the patterns of television past, demanding more challenging formats to hold its attention.[37]

Conclusions and Implications

The link between the characteristics of television literacy, television trends, and the television generation suggests that

television does have its own grammar that has been mastered by a generation raised on television. The parallels drawn in this essay also claim a place for critical approaches to television in questions about the relationship between symbolic patterns of media and mind.

Taking the claims of this essay a step further, a critical comparison between the symbolic grammars of programs appealing to different "media generations" could explore the possibility that the television generation approaches the sounds and images of television in a way that is distinct from other media generations. Is there a "book" generation, for instance, that prefers sequential and analytic television grammars?

Within the boundaries of television viewing, television critics can also tackle more general questions about the symbolic processes of thought. The flexibility of the cognitive processes, for instance, can be studied by analyzing the symbolic patterns present in the flow of programs and commercials watched by a given audience on a given evening. Can an audience abruptly change its modes of processing? Insight into cognitive flexibility is as valuable to television programmers as it is to scholars of the mind.

Another interesting issue that lends itself to critical analysis is whether symbolic structures are determined by subject matter. In other words, are symbolic patterns of thought and communication content free or are they field dependent? One critical approach to this question would involve analyzing and comparing the grammars of episodes from different television programs that address the same themes.

There are many fruitful possibilities for the television critic who looks at the cognitive side of television grammar. Of course the cognitive approach to television assumes the symbolic relationships of the television message have a counterpart in thought. No critic can be certain about the truth of this assumption. But even the social scientist, armed with tests of validity and reliability, cannot with certainty, know the extent to which the symbolic processes of communication are linked to the symbolic processes of thought.

Notes

[1] Critical studies of television are noticeably absent from the domain of cognitive science which draws from fields as diverse as philosophy, anthropology, and artificial intelligence to better understand the ways the mind manipulates symbols. See: Howard Gardner, The Mind's New Science: A History of the Cognitive Revolution (New York: Basic Books, 1985).

[2] Howard Gardner, Art, Mind, and Brain: A Cognitive Approach to Creativity (New York: Basic Books, 1982), p. 236.

[3] This essay is a genuine field study in the sense that the author first noticed the trends as a television viewer. In preparation for the paper, all television programs aired on the three major networks between 8:00 and 11:00 PM, October 1984 through December 1984 were video taped. The shows were analyzed for similarities and differences among their symbolic constructions--both technical and substantive. Although the trends addressed in the essay are based upon the video taped sample, references are made to specific programs aired before and after the taping period.

[4] Howard Gardner, Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences (New York: Basic Books, 1983), p. 359.

[5] Patricia Marks Greenfield, Mind and Media (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), p. 10; and Gardner, Art, Ch. 22.

[6] Gavriel Salomon, Interaction of Media, Cognition, and Learning (San Fran: Jossey-Bass, 1981), p. 52.

[7] Salomon, p. 30.

[8] Greenfield, p. 17.

[9] The grammar of television is certainly akin to film grammar, but some important distinctions necessitate differentiating television literacy from film literacy. The social and technical context of film and television are quite different and so viewers encounter and process the messages differently. See: Richard Adler, "Introduction: A Context for Criticism," in Television as a Cultural Force, ed. Richard Adler and Douglas Cater (New York: Praeger, 1976), pp. 1-17; George Comstock, Television in America (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1980), p. 98; John Fiske, "Television and Popular Culture: Reflections of British and Australian Critical Practice," Critical Studies in Mass Communication, 3 (1986), 211-213; and Alex Toogood, A Formalist View of the Television Medium, Paper presented at the Iowa Symposium and Conference on Television Criticism in Iowa City, April 1985.

[10] Greenfield, p. 20.

[11] Dondis A. Dondis, A Primer of Visual Literacy (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1973), p. 18.

[12] Caren Deming, "Hill Street Blues as Narrative," CSMC, 2 (1985), 3.

[13] Gardner, Frames, Ch. 6.

[14] Jane Feuer, "The MTM Style," in MTM 'Quality Television', ed. Jane Feuer, Paul Kerr, and Tise Vahimagi (London: Cowell, 1984), pp. 45-57.

[15] Feuer, "Style," p. 38.

[16] Several widely accepted studies have demonstrated that linguistic meanings are stored in the memory as abstract, holistic

patterns. See: F. C. Bartlett, Remembering (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1932); and John Bransford and Jeffrey Franks, "The Abstraction of Linguistic Ideas," Cognitive Psychology, 2 (1971), 331-350.

[17] Weismann, D. L., The Visual Arts as Human Experience (New Jersey: Englewood Cliffs, n.d.), p. 11.

[18] John Fiske and John Hartley, Reading Television (Great Britain: Methuen, 1978), pp. 124-125.

[19] Gary Gumpert and Robert Cathcart, "Media Grammars, Generations, and Media Gaps," CSMC, 2 (1985), 23.

20 Joshua Meyrowitz defines each historical network of coexistent media as a "media matrix" in No Sense of Place (New York: Oxford, 1985), p. 339.

[21] The 33 yr. old age group is an estimate based on data which makes this age group 4 years old in 1953, the year the majority of U. S. families with young children owned television sets. See Meyrowitz, p. 137.

[22] George Comstock and Marilyn Fisher, Television and Human Behavior: A Guide to the Pertinent Scientific Literature (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1975).

[23] Gumpert and Cathcart, p. 30.

24 Gumpert and Cathcart, p. 29.

[25] A most thorough investigation of how media symbol systems might influence patterns of thought provided by Salomon, Chs. 4 and 5.

[26] James Chesebro, "The Media Reality: Epistemological Functions of Media in Cultural Systems," CSMC, 1 (1984), 124.

[27] Erik Barnouw, The Sponsor: Notes on a Modern Potentate (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 71.

[28] Jane Feuer, "MTM Enterprises: An Overview," In Quality Television, p. 3.

[29] James Traub, "The World According to Nielsen," Channels, Jan./Feb. 1985, p. 29.

[30] Barbara Holsopple, "Networks Premiere 20 New Series," TV Magazine of the Pittsburgh Press, 15 Sept. 1985, p. 2.

[31] William A. Henry III., "The Best New Program Trend in Years," Channels, Jan./Feb. 1984, p. 55.

[32] Traub, p. 29.

[33] Greenfield, p. 20.

[34] Jeremy G. Butler, "Miami Vice and the Legacy of Film Noir," Journal of Popular Film and Television, 13 (1985), 127.

[35] Comstock, p. 30.

[36] Salomon, Ch. 8.

[37] Greenfield, pp. 88-91.